Joint Press Statement
of Jimmy Webb, Chairman, MBA Board of Trustees,
and Brad Gioia, MBA Headmaster

With respect to the now-closed TSSAA inquiry, Board Chairman Jimmy Webb stated, "We are obviously disappointed and regret that any TSSAA violations have occurred, but we accept responsibility for our mistakes. **We are pleased that the TSSAA found, with respect to the Tuition and Financial Aid Rule issues, that at no time did anyone at MBA intentionally attempt to circumvent that Rule or gain any unfair athletic advantage in any sport.** Many of the Tuition and Financial Aid Rule issues involved efforts by third parties to assist MBA students whose families were in the midst of a personal and/or financial crisis. These instances of third-party financial assistance for families in need were by no means limited to student-athletes. **We are also pleased that the TSSAA found that MBA's decisive actions taken last spring, including forming its own investigatory committee, self-reporting the possible violations to the TSSAA, and cooperating fully with the TSSAA were the primary reasons the TSSAA did not place any future restrictions on MBA's athletics program.**"

MBA Headmaster Brad Gioia stated: "We accept full responsibility. We fully understand that, with respect to the Tuition and Financial Aid Rule, we must be vigilant not to accept tuition payments from third parties, no matter how honorable their intentions or how emotionally compelling a particular situation may be. In the future, we will seek hardship waivers from the TSSAA in these instances. I am also glad that the TSSAA found that we did not intend to circumvent that Rule or gain any unfair athletic advantage. I am particularly happy for our students that the TSSAA saw no need to place future restrictions on our athletics program. **This entire experience has been a difficult one for MBA, but I firmly believe that MBA and its athletics program have emerged stronger.** We are in a much better place, and we will move

forward positively, responsibly, and forthrightly. Finally, contrary to *The City Paper*'s recent report, I had no knowledge of the $1,500 payment in 2008 that the TSSAA found constituted a Recruiting Rule violation, until that payment was disclosed to me in April 2011."

Mr. Webb concluded, "MBA has had a long and illustrious athletics history, and athletics will continue to be an important part of the overall educational experience at MBA. However, notwithstanding the current trend in high school athletics, MBA will continue to focus on the ideal of Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete, and we will strive to keep all athletics in their proper perspective. We will also work hard to be the leader of the independent schools in Tennessee in terms of compliance with both the letter and spirit of TSSAA rules."